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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

REPORT

INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY Latvia

SUBJECT Varonis Rubber Factory

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1. The rubber factory "Varonis" was founded in 1920 in Riga, Latvia. The factory is located on Brivibas Street in Riga near the so-called Air Bridge (rail-road overpass). At first the plant was very small, but by 1944 it had expanded to 15 thousand square feet of factory grounds housed in two large buildings. Its employees numbered one thousand.
2. Articles produced at the plant up until 1941 were the following:

<u>Amount per day</u>	<u>Article</u>
4000 pairs	Rubbers
1000 "	Boots
500 "	Leather shoes
1000 each	Bicycle tires and tubes
400 "	Hard rubber battery cases

In addition, the factory also produced conveyor belts, hot water bottles, stoppers, nipples, rubber gloves, and gas masks.

3. Equipment in 1944 consisted of ten large rubber mixers ("walzen"), two large vulcanization kettles, 20 vulcanization presses, two steam kettles, and the corresponding necessary molding forms, cutting knives, calenders for forming rubber sheets, and rubber cement mixers.
4. When the Soviets occupied Latvia in 1940, the plant was nationalized and by 1941 the trend to convert the factory into a plant which produced only one article was already noticeable. In other words the plant was to be incorporated into the Soviet industrial system. This conversion was interrupted by the German occupation (from July 1941-1944, but when the Soviets regained control, the plant was ordered to specialize in conveyor belts only. Equipment from other plants was transferred to Varonis to increase the working capacity.
that the factory is still producing only conveyor belts at the present time (December 1952).

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- 2 -

5. The emphasis on conveyor belt production was brought about by the Soviet desire (even in 1941) to exploit the oil deposits discovered in the 1930's in Estonia. These deposits were discovered in a waste layer containing a mineral consisting of 60 % oil and 40 % stone. This mineral can be used for fuel by burning it directly or else by distilling the oil for use as machine oil. Hence the Soviets concentrated the production at Varenis in order to attain the necessary conveyor belts for transporting this mineral from the Estonian mines. The leather shoes department, of course, has been shut down completely. 50X1
6. One difference between the factory [redacted] (1920-1940; 1941-1944) and now (1952) is the fact that formerly only natural rubber was used at the plant, but now [redacted] the Soviets are using synthetic rubber almost exclusively. 50X1
7. Research facilities at the factory consisted of a laboratory which was established in 1939 in which were employed one chemical engineer and four assistants. This research was directed towards experimentation with different ingredients which combined with the rubber would result in a superior product and also with the regeneration of rubber, as a lot of the rubber used in the manufacturing was regenerated rubber.

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